

Upcoming Events

October 2022

Breast Cancer Awareness Month
Disability Employment Awareness Month
Domestic Violence Awareness Month
Global Diversity Awareness Month
Italian American Heritage Month
Polish American Heritage Month
Work and Family Month

CX Day

October 4

German-American Day

October 6

Leif Erikson Day

October 9

Columbus Day

Indigenous Peoples' Day

October 10

General Pulaski Memorial Day

October 11

White Cane Safety Day

October 15

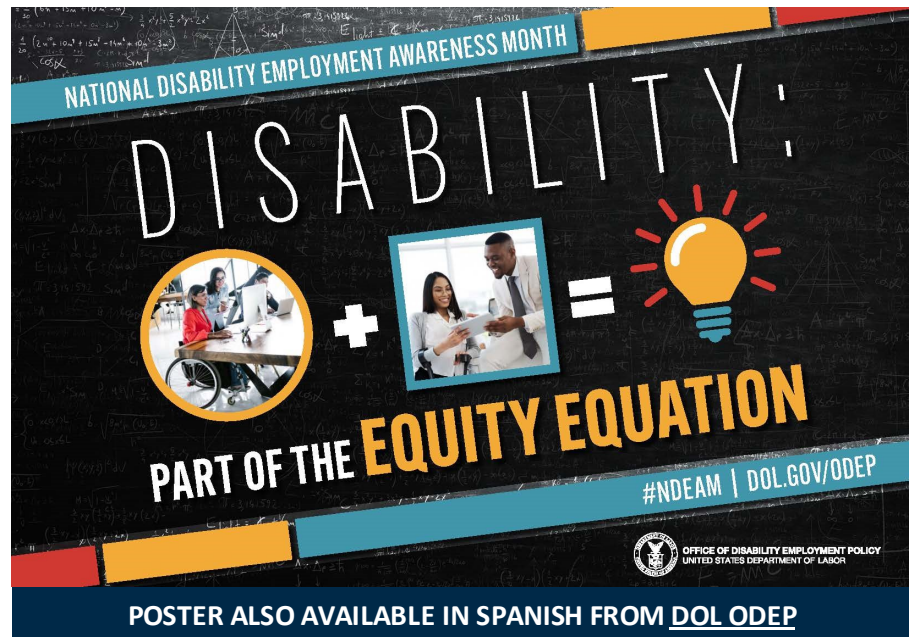
Diversity and Inclusion in VA Quarterly Meeting

October 19

ORMDI

Steps Toward Conflict Resolution

You can contact ORMDI toll-free at 1-888-566-3982 (TDD/TTY, dial 711 before providing this number) and speak with a specialist regarding equal employment opportunity (EEO) complaint processing or harassment prevention. You must initiate contact with an EEO counselor within 45 days of the date of the alleged act of discrimination by calling 1-888-566-3982 or visiting your local ORMDI Field Office. The harassment prevention procedures do not affect rights under the EEO complaint process. Harassment should be reported immediately to a manager or supervisor, Harassment Prevention Coordinator, or the Harassment Prevention Program. For Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) services, email the Office of the Chief Human Capital Officer ADR team at workplaceadr@va.gov.



Commemorate

National Disability Employment Awareness Month

VA joins the Nation in commemorating National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM) this October. In recognition of the importance of persons with disabilities (PWD) within a diverse and inclusive American and Federal workforce, the 2022 theme announced by the Department of Labor Office of Disability Employment Policy ([DOL ODEP](https://www.dol.gov/odep)) is "Disability: Part of the Equity Equation."

To conscientiously attain equity for PWD and persons with targeted disabilities (PWTD) and in alignment with Executive Order 14035 on

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility in the Federal Workforce, we each have a responsibility to integrate our ideas, words and actions toward inclusivity. An appreciation of the added value of diversity and unique perspective is first necessary to ensure that our actions complement VA's goal to exceed the current state of the agency.

As of August 2022, 48,200 (11.75%) of VA's permanent workforce have reportable disabilities and 9,471 (2.31%) have targeted disabilities. Additionally, of the 118,236 Veterans within the VA's permanent workforce, 55,026 (46.5%) are Disabled Veterans.

Inclusion of everyone's diverse abilities strengthens innovation and is integral to VA mission success! For more information, visit [VA's Individuals with Disabilities Employment Program](#) webpage or contact Mr. Roberto Rojo, VA's National Individuals with Disabilities Special Emphasis Program Manager.



DAS Johnson

Message from the DAS

Harvey Johnson, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Resolution Management, Diversity and Inclusion

To foster the innovation VA requires to meet its mission, we must ensure that our workforce reflects the diversity of those we serve, that we purposefully embrace inclusion, and that all employees are empowered to perform to their highest potential. This October, during National Disability Employment Awareness Month, I ask you to reflect on the responsibility we each carry to increase accessibility in order to advance equity in support of Executive Order 14035 and ensure we are being inclusive of all individuals. In demonstrating and cultivating the understanding that diversity and inclusion exponentially strengthen the unique thoughts and perspectives that can help accomplish VA's mission, you also influence and elevate the behaviors of those around you.

Finally, the Assistant Secretary for Human Resources and Administration/Operations, Security and Preparedness signed the External Affinity Events Approved for Department of Veterans Affairs-Wide Participation for Fiscal Year 2023. These external affinity events are designed to promote equal employment opportunity and offer career development, education and employment outreach services in support of Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Access (I-DEA). For more information, reach out to the VA point of contact listed for the specific event.

Thank you for your commitment and support as we collectively work to advance I-DEA in VA!

October 4 is CX Day

ORMDI's Customer Experience Team Shares Available Resources

The first Tuesday in October is recognized annually as Customer Experience (CX) Day! The purpose is to recognize and celebrate the importance of customers and their experiences, and CX professionals. In 1992, Congress originally proclaimed the first week of October as Customer Service Week, now a nationally recognized event. As Goal 1 of VA's 2022-28 Strategic Plan is Customer Experience, VA employees are encouraged to adopt a CX mindset and be reminded that every interaction increases trust, directly or indirectly, at every touchpoint with customers.



The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) expanded the definition of customer to "include [Federal] public servants and employees themselves in their interactions with Federal processes" and also pertains to VA's approximately 400,000 employees ([OMB Circular A-11, Section 280](#)). The Department understands that to provide the highest level of care and benefits to our Veterans, their families, caregivers, and survivors, the same attention and commitments must be accorded to each teammate because CX will never outpace the employee experience (EX).

In 2021, in alignment with Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Access (I-DEA) principles and in recognition that measures of experience include measures of equity, ORMDI partnered with the Veterans Experience Office (VEO) EX Directorate to build a knowledge base of VA employee experiences. [Phase I of the Identity Insights Initiative](#) examined eight identity groups that have faced historic less than favorable representation and/or discrimination and bias in the VA workplace. Phase II will begin in August. VA employees interested in participating can contact the ORMDI CX team at ORMODICXEngagement@va.gov.

A related initiative is Stay in VA which focused on employee retention through employee engagement. The goal is that supervisors will better understand how to retain their employees and promote a trusted work environment through informal dialogue between supervisors and employees about job satisfaction. Be sure to check out the [VA Diffusion Marketplace](#) for more information about this best practice.

The ORMDI CX Team also encourages VA employees to check out the numerous other resources and tools available from VEO. The journey maps available from the [VEO website](#) help to explain what matters most to VA's customers and employees. Together, these resources help to strengthen relationships, equity, and a sense of belonging – CX and EX—throughout the Department.

External Affinity Conferences

VA employees who plan to attend any of the following external affinity conferences/events are responsible for obtaining supervisory approvals. Please note that centralized funding is not available for attendance. Funding for registration must come from the employee's benefitting program office:

Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities 36th Annual Conference

The Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACU) will host its 36th Annual Conference on October 8-10, 2022, at the Manchester Grand Hyatt in San Diego, California. The conference will include plenaries, luncheons, and networking opportunities, and it will provide a unique forum to share information and ideas for the most promising practices in the education of Hispanics. Following supervisory and budget approval, attendees must also register on the [HACU website](#). For more information, contact Ms. Karen M. Basnight, VA's Acting Departmental Hispanic Employment Program Manager, ORMDI.



Out & Equal Workplace Summit

Out & Equal Workplace Advocates will host its annual Workplace Summit on October 17-20, 2022, in Las Vegas, Nevada. Each year, more than 5,000 executives, employee resource group leaders and members, human resources, diversity and inclusion professionals and experts convene at the Out & Equal Workplace Summit – the largest LGBTQ focused conference in the world. The Summit has grown to become the preferred place to network, share strategies and best practices that help create workplaces which are inclusive of all sexual orientations, gender identities, and gender expressions – workplaces where everyone belongs, and where LGBTQ employees can be out and thrive. Following supervisory and budget approval, attendees must also register on the [Out & Equal website](#). For more information, contact Mr. Sterling Akins, VA's Departmental LGBTQ+ Program Manager, ORMDI.



Gay and Lesbian Medical Association Annual Conference

The 40th Gay and Lesbian Medical Association (GLMA) Annual Conference on LGBTQ Health will be held at the Hilton San Francisco Union Square October 19-22, 2022. The theme is "Local Action, Global Impact." GLMA aims to highlight speakers (including community leaders, researchers, policy makers and clinicians, particularly those from the Bay Area) who are acting locally, but with a global impact, both by setting the tone for innovative and forward-thinking approaches to care, and by creating models that are replicable beyond the Bay's footprint. The conference is open to healthcare providers of all disciplines, researchers, academics, health administrators, policy experts, advocates, and all LGBTQ+ health supporters. Following supervisory and budget approval, attendees must also register on the [GLMA website](#). For more information, contact Mr. Sterling Akins, VA's Departmental LGBTQ+ Program Manager, ORMDI.

Training

The Audacity to Fail Podcast

The [Audacity to Fail Podcast: misStepping Into Success](#) focuses on discovering leadership wisdom through experiences with failures and missteps. The podcast dives into conversations and stories from leaders as they share that failure activates a growth mindset, is an important part of learning, and motivation for improvement! In this episode, Dr. Shari Dade talks workplace relationships with Erik Sletten, the Workforce Excellence Coordinator for VA North Texas Health Care System. In his role, Mr. Sletten focuses on the development of leaders, teams, and employees throughout the North Texas System. Listen in for a discussion of how mindset and emotional intelligence play a role in moving beyond transactional workplace connections. The series is also available on the [Talent Management System](#).



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